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great hunks of snowy fat (the poor man's meat), buckets of blood and entrails. The fish stalls, less gory and less colorful, abound with local river fish and a few ocean fish brought in on the early train, some swimming in buckets, others gutted but missing no eyes—a great delicacy, or tails—a matter of aesthetics. And everywhere there are chickens, ducks, geese, both live and dead. The smells to a foreign nose are sometimes exhilirating, sometimes appalling; the sounds are bewildering. The day's fowl quack, cluck, and honk their distress; above their protest the voices of customers and merchants rise and fall. The din of heated bargaining blends a variety of languages. The farmers speak either Hokkien or Hakka, the native Chinese dialects of the island; a few merchants and their friends converse in Japanese; policemen and soldiers prefer Mandarin, the official language.

Away from the uproar of the market, Tapu's streets seem relatively calm. The paved main street ends at the canal, an irrigation ditch civilized by concrete banks for its passage through town. In several places, steps that lead into the canal end in small platforms where the storekeepers' wives and daughters can do their laundry while keeping an eye on the store. There are more shops on both sides of the canal: a small bookstore, a tailor, a fabric and ready-made clothing store, a photographer, and a paper store that supplies school children with copy books and pencils, and adults with the paraphernalia of worship—metal wires dipped in incense and bundles of spirit money burned to provide for the deceased. One of my favorite shops is that of the *beidz*-maker who fills the air with a lively rhythmic chwing-chwing sound as he fluffs cotton into puffy battings for warm winter comforters. A little farther down the street a noodle-maker is usually at work. He suspends strips of dough between pegged poles which he gradually moves farther and farther apart as the noodles stretch and dry. Just beyond the noodle-maker is a small, paved square, formed where the canal goes underground. This is the site of a shrine dedicated to Tu Ti Kung, the lowest ranking god in the Chinese supernatural bureaucracy. Tu Ti Kung serves his celestial superiors as the official recorder of the activities of the living. In the country, he is the guardian of the land and the god of agriculture; in the town, he is considered a patron of business and a god of wealth. The responsibility for burning incense at his shrine each morning rotates among the families residing in his district.

and moreover, since a woman typically is pregnant for a period of time before becoming aware, the bedrooms of potentially fertile women are seldom cleaned. The only truly safe period is 30 days after a child is born, the morning before intercourse is resumed. If Tai Shen is inadvertently offended, which can be detected through a sharp pain in the abdomen at the time of the disturbing activity, it is necessary to call in a shaman to pacify him. Because of Tai Shen it is necessary that parturition take place in the regular bedroom.

An interesting change in this belief about Tai Shen is related to modern medical practices emanating out of a small public hospital in Hsin Tien which provides a doctor for child birth. The mines provide the families of workers with medical insurance and many miner's wives are therefore having babies in the hospital, fairly common in Erhlei but still rare in Sanlei. Twenty years ago, it was impossible to discover the hiding place of Tai Shen but today, religious specialists are able to detect his hiding place so the object in which he is hiding can be taken to the hospital in Hsin Tien with the woman in labor.

There is a whole host of other taboos for the pregnant woman: tying strings in her bedroom will effect the baby's fingers; using scissors, the ears; needles, the eyes, etc. Funerals are likely to cause miscarriages. Wedding ceremonies are also off limits because the belief in hsi